

we anticipate the spirit of President Ford's sentiments will continue to endure long after the death of the late former President.

Fortunately, the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act remains strong. Overarching concerns for European security and liberty during the Cold War have evolved into regional energy security dilemmas, kleptocracy, and continued human rights violations. Moreover, Europe once again faces serious security concerns as Russia has suspended its obligations under the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty.

Madam Speaker, we must never forget how valuable the process of engagement has served the interests of Europe and the United States in the past. Working together in an integrated framework of cooperation and security is our best hope for peace and justice. While the world has been changing at an ever increasing pace since 1975, our ideals and values remain entrenched in the commitments made under the Helsinki Final Act.

Today we recognize the significant impact the Helsinki Final Act made in fostering a world with increased peace and justice. Today, Helsinki Human Rights Day, we honor our commitments and pledge vigilance in the quest for human rights, governmental accountability and cooperation for security throughout Europe, North America, Central Asia, and elsewhere in the world.

REGARDING H.R. 3327

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I have co-sponsored H.R. 3327 to amend the Animal Welfare Act to prohibit dog fighting ventures because of the terrible problem of dog fighting. The author of the bill has assured me that in the committee process the penalties imposed on spectators will be modified.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2272, AMERICA COMPETES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2272, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education and Science (COMPETES) Act. We have recently learned that in the coming years, children in India and China may be better prepared for the jobs of the future than our own children here in the United States: Further, the 2005 National Academies report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm", emphasized the United States could lose its competitive edge without immediate action being taken. In response to these alarming reports, Congress has shifted focus to strengthening our science technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

Today, H.R. 2272, legislation to ensure that the students, teachers, and workers will not be left behind as the world moves forward in new

technology development and innovation, is being considered. The bill authorizes funding for programs to create more qualified teachers in science and math fields and to support scientific research and innovation through the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

I believe our teachers are the cornerstone to leading future generations in STEM fields and I believe we must give them the proper resources to meet this goal. This legislation stands to create and equip thousands of new teachers and give current teachers the content and instructional skills they need in order to teach science and mathematics.

The legislation authorizes a total of \$22 billion over fiscal years 2008–2010 for research, education, and other programs at the National Science Foundation; \$2.65 billion for the research labs, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and other activities at the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST); and \$17 billion for programs at the Department of Energy.

Mr. Speaker, we must set policies that ensure the United States will remain competitive in the future. I support this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.

THANKS TO MINNESOTA'S MILITARY HEROES

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, the Minnesota Army and Air National Guard have welcomed home nearly 2,600 citizen soldiers who were called to active duty for the war in Iraq. Most of those Minnesotans, who are returning from Iraq, were deployed for 22 months and many spent 16 months in combat. The brave men and women of the Minnesota National Guard deserve our respect and our gratitude. The members of the Minnesota National Guard, their families, friends and employers have all endured a hardship during the past 22 months. The sacrifices they made, and the quiet dignity they displayed during that time, are not surprising to those who have had the honor of meeting them.

The State of Minnesota is very proud of the active duty, reserve and National Guard who enlisted from our State. The Minnesota State seal depicts an individual working hard on farmland. The seal is a perfect symbol of the strong work ethic displayed by the brave men and women from our State who serve in the military. Our State seal also includes the words "L'etoile du Nord" which translated from French means "Star of the North." The men and women from Minnesota served under various group names, such as Soldier, Airmen, Sailors, Marines, Red Bulls, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Active Duty, Reservist, and many more. Regardless of their military affiliation, those who served have shown the world that Minnesotans are prepared for any challenge and able to perform any task and that they are truly bright stars of the north.

The Minnesota National Guard served the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi

Freedom. Members of the Minnesota National Guard completed 5,200 combat logistics patrols, secured 2.4 million convoy miles, discovered 462 improvised explosive devices prior to detonation, processed over 1.5 million vehicles and 400,000 Iraqis into entry control points without an insurgent penetration. The men and women of the Minnesota National Guard also completed 137 reconstruction projects in Iraq.

Veterans who fought in wars and were discharged many years ago have told me that they appreciate it when people thank them for their service. I do not want the men and women who return from Iraq, Afghanistan or other locations to wait years before hearing me thank them for their service. I offer a heartfelt, sincere thank you to all Minnesotans who served and are currently serving in the United States military. I welcome home all the brave individuals who have devoted their time and talents to defend our Nation and provide security in the world. Some Minnesotans deployed to combat areas and lost their lives. I hope all Americans remember these brave men and women and continue to support the families they left behind. I encourage all Americans to thank a veteran or member of our military for their service. I also encourage this Congress and all citizens to offer any assistance to our Nation's military personnel and their families as they transition back to the lives they led prior to their deployments.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CALLING CARD CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues' strong support of a bill that I am introducing, which would protect calling card consumers from being scammed and stop prepaid calling card deception. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my friend and colleague on the Energy and Commerce Committee, Congressman MIKE FERGUSON, who joins me as an original cosponsor of this bill.

As you may already be aware, calling cards allow one to purchase telephone talk time in advance and since the financial transaction occurs before card use, many companies have successfully hidden additional fees and terms that are then hard to appeal. Some consumers find that the calling card rates are higher than advertised or that they must pay surcharges or extra undisclosed taxes. In other cases, the calling card company automatically deducts minutes even if the consumer is unable to connect with the party they attempted to call. Even worse, many consumers find they are being scammed out of minutes and are being cut off in the middle of phone conversations.

To help combat some of the aforementioned issues that plague our constituents, Congressman FERGUSON and I will be introducing the "Calling Card Consumer Protection Act" which requires disclosures related to terms and conditions on all advertising, cards or packaging. It would also require that the calling card service providers disclose a detailed description of any additional fees and the company's name

and contact information for consumers should a problem arise. Again, I urge my colleagues support and cosponsorship of this important consumer protection bill.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE PROTECTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support of the "Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act of 2007" (CHAMP or H.R. 3162) and would like to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. JOHN DINGELL for the inclusion of my State Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) small employer buy-in proposal. He is a good friend and an invaluable leader in providing adequate health insurance to all of America's children.

Today, it is estimated that of the 9.4 million uninsured children, 7 million of them are eligible for SCHIP, but are not enrolled. Furthermore, approximately 37 percent of the 6.6 million children currently enrolled in SCHIP have parents who work in businesses with fewer than 100 employees. Due to the high cost of health insurance in the private small group and individual market, many of these parents do not have access to affordable health insurance for themselves. To help cover these parents and enroll the 7 million uninsured children eligible for SCHIP, I believe that one viable solution is for Congress to provide small employers access to buy into a public health care program, such as the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

With the support of Chairman DINGELL, the CHAMP Act does just that—it establishes a demonstration program for up to 10 States to offer employers and their employees the option to buy into a State's children's health insurance program.

In order for a State to participate in the demonstration program it may not impose a waiting list, enrollment cap, or any other enrollment limitation on low-income children at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL). As for the employer qualifications, 50 percent of his or her workforce must comprise of full-time employees with family incomes at or below 200 percent of the poverty line. Furthermore, eligible employees must have at least one eligible SCHIP child in their family.

If an employer agrees to participate, the program requires the employer to make a contribution no less than 50 percent of the premium toward the family coverage. The employee is required to make a contribution no greater than 5 percent of their entire income of the premium toward family coverage. The SCHIP funds used to cover the eligible children are the only allowable SCHIP funds that may be applied toward the family coverage. At the State's discretion, any remaining cost of the family coverage may be covered by the employer or the State. Specifically, the State may use its own funds or apply an access fee to the employer for utilizing the purchasing pooling power of their children's health care program.

As the CHAMP Act moves to conference, I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will view this demonstration as one viable solution to addressing the health care crisis. Again, I thank Chairman DINGELL for his outstanding leadership and support. At the end of the day, I am confident we will accomplish our goal of insuring as many children as possible.

REDUCING BARRIERS TO EDUCATION ACT OF 2007

HON. DAVID LOEBACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. LOEBACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Reducing Barriers to Learning Act of 2007. Students come to school with diverse academic and non-academic needs. A student may have trouble reading, or have a chronic health condition or a disability. Students may have hearing problems or problems with their eyesight. They may have behavior problems. Some children may have experienced a tragedy or have family problems. They may live in poor conditions or be subject to violence in their homes or communities.

It's abundantly clear that many students face severe barriers to learning. In order to reduce these barriers and help our children succeed in the classroom and in the community we must find a way to positively affect their social and emotional well being. A child is only prepared to learn when he or she is healthy and strong, both mentally and physically.

Unfortunately, 20 percent of the 53 million children in school will, at some point, meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental illness at a level of impairment that requires some type of intervention. Thus, there is the potential that over 10 million children will need some type of help to meet the goals relating to emotional well-being in the No Child Left Behind legislation.

The school can be an important site where the health and education risks of students may be identified. Early identification and intervention addressing a student's social and emotional health is essential. Many important services are provided by school counselors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, therapists, and many others. These individuals, commonly referred to as pupil services personnel, are lifelines to our children.

Unfortunately, very little attention is paid to these personnel and the services they provide for struggling students. In fact, there is a shortage of school mental health positions. Current recommended ratios are 250 students per counselor; 400 students per social worker; and 1,000 students per psychologist. Unfortunately, reality does not match recommendations. Current national averages are 488 students per counselor and over 1,600 students per school social worker and psychologist.

In Iowa, during the prior school year, 40 districts out of 365 did not have a school counselor. The State legislature recently reconstituted the mandate that every district have "a" counselor and included goal language that staffing levels work toward no more than 1 counselor for every 350 students. The ratio of students per school social worker is 2000 to 1.

These shortages jeopardize a schools ability to provide broad-based mental health services

to students. Unfortunately, very little attention is paid to these personnel and the services they provide for struggling students. This appears to be largely a reflection of a lack of leadership at the national, state, and local level.

The Reducing Barriers to Learning Act of 2007 takes necessary steps toward increasing student access to critical services so that we can better address the nonacademic needs of students and reduce barriers to learning.

The bill creates a grant program for State Education Agencies to build the capacity of Local Education Agencies to develop programs and personnel dedicated to removing barriers to learning. These grants will help recruit and retain coordinators at the local level; establish and expand instructional support services programs; and provide technical assistance regarding the effective implementation of instructional support services programs.

The bill also establishes an Office of Specialized Instructional Support within the U.S. Department of Education. This office will administer, coordinate, and carry out programs and activities concerned with providing specialized instructional support services in schools. The office will provide technical assistance to State education agencies and State specialized instructional support coordinators, if any. It will also improve cross-agency coordination of services and programs supporting students who face barriers to learning.

Finally, the bill simply clarifies conflicting terminology, definitions, and roles of specialized instructional support personnel. The personnel are known as "pupil services personnel" in the ESEA and as "related services personnel" in the IDEA, despite the fact that they are exactly the same professionals. This difference in terminology continues to cause confusion for school districts. Establishing one common statutory term would ease this confusion and would more accurately reflect the nature and purpose of the services that these professionals provide to students in schools.

Knowing who is available to support struggling students in schools is essential. Connecting students in need with a professional who can assist them and be accountable to them is the only way to know that we will leave no child behind. The Reducing Barriers to Education Act of 2007 will take necessary steps toward increasing student access to critical support services and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this important legislation.

HONORING THE CAREER OF JACK EDISON OF PLYMOUTH, INDIANA

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the career of Plymouth High School boys' basketball coach, Jack Edison. After 34 years, 545 wins, 18 sectional titles, 9 regional crowns, 4 Final 4 appearances, 3 state finals, and 2 state titles as head coach of the Plymouth Pilgrims, Coach Edison has retired.

This beloved coach finished his final season with a second state title, making him the ninth winningest coach in Indiana's legendary high